

The logo for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, consisting of the letters 'VA' in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**

Veterans Health Administration  
VA Portland Health Care System

# Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

**Regulation:** the Freedom of information act, (5 U.S.C. 552); Title 38 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Sections 1.550-1.562.

**Requirement:** The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) provides that any person has a right to obtain access to Federal agency records, except to the extent that such records are protected from release by a FOIA exemption or other Federal Statute.

**Details:** It is VA's policy to release information to the fullest extent under the law.

**Process:** There is no special form required to submit a FOIA, however, the Department of Veterans Affairs requires that the FOIA request:

- Be in writing
- Properly describe the records sought
- Contain the requestor's name and contact information
- Contain any form of the requestor's signature if the documents being requested involve a personal privacy interest or are protected by another confidentiality statute.
- State the requestor's willingness to pay applicable fees if necessary

**Auditing:** The request is submitted to the Facility FOIA Officer who will ensure the following

- Request is date stamped
- Request is entered into the FOIAXpress tracking database and is assigned a tracking number

- Acknowledgement letter is sent to requestor acknowledging receipt of request providing him/her with a tracking number
- A search for responsive records is conducted.
- Responsive Documents are reviewed and redacted as required by law and provided to requester with appeal rights.

## Types of Request:

- Traditional FOIA
- Records on Deceased Individuals
- Police Reports/Investigative Reports(IR)
- Third Party Requests for Veteran Medical Records

## Submitting a request:

Who do you submit a FOIA request to? **Contact FOIA Officer at (503) 220-8262 or at FOIAPortland@va.gov**

How can requesters file a FOIA request?

- Mail (insert FOIA Officer mailing address)
- Fax (insert facility FOIA fax number)
- Email (Insert facility FOIA mailbox/email)
- Referral

## What is the VA staff role with FOIA?

- Be aware of the FOIA when reviewing requests for information received from outside the agency
- Consult with and forward requests for information to the FOIA Officer as appropriate
- Conduct record search assignments from the FOIA Officer and provide a timely response.
- Inform the FOIA Officer of other locations/offices that may have records responsive to a request

**For more information, contact the VAPORHCS FOIA Officer, Brian Roth, at 503-220-8262 ext. 51023**